# OD Telework Program Policy
### Release Date: June 17, 2004

As of October 30, 2003, HHS/NIH has a new Telework Program Policy. This OD policy does not supersede the NIH Telework Policy, but rather highlights some important telework issues. For more specific information (including limited personal use and remote access), please see the NIH Telework Policy at http://www1.od.nih.gov/oma/manualchapters/person/2300-600-1/. *Visit the Executive Office Website for the required Telework and Remote Access Forms.*

Participation in AWS is an employment benefit, not an entitlement. The OD leadership is promoting a fair OD Telework Program that gives employees the flexibility to work at home (or another approved location) instead of an NIH office (or official duty station).

## What are the types of telework schedules or arrangements?

- **Regular Telework -** set the same number of days (e.g., one or two days per week/pay period).

- **Episodic Telework** (less frequent than regular telework) - set in advance for specific tasks (e.g., monthly financial statements, semi-annual performance reviews, quarterly progress reports, grants reviews, etc.).

- **Ad Hoc/Situational Telework** (not on a regular schedule) - set for a limited time as needed (e.g., special/one-time projects).

- **Medical Telework** (temporary) - may be regular, episodic, or ad hoc/situational telework while recovering from an injury or illness.

- **Reasonable Accommodation Telework -** may be regular, episodic, or ad hoc/situational telework, as appropriate.

## Are you eligible to apply for telework?
You are eligible if you are a full or part-time permanent Federal Civil Service employee who:
- does not need to meet in person with coworkers or customers daily;
- works in an office that will have appropriate coverage on the proposed telework days;
- has "portable" work assignments (can be done while teleworking without affecting quality);
- has an acceptable level of performance;
- does not need close supervision;
- is not on special leave procedures or a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP); and
- has no documented misconduct personnel action on permanent record within the last three years.

*Note*
- *Employees on an alternative work schedule (AWS) are eligible.*

- *Commissioned Corps personnel are not covered by this policy and should refer to the Commissioned Corps guidance on the Use of Alternative Workplaces at http://dcp.psc.gov/PDF_docs/23510.pdf.*

## Who may approve telework agreements?
Approval authority has been delegated to the OD Office Directors.

## How do you apply to telework?
You need to give your completed Telework Program application to your first-line supervisor.

Your first line supervisor will:
- Review your application;
- Work with the OD Administrative Officer (AO) and the OD Telework Coordinator to develop your telework agreement;
- Outline your need to continue working in case of an emergency dismissal or shutdown in your telework agreement;
- Arrange an appointment with the OD Telework Coordinator and both of you to ensure that you all understand the telework agreement; and
- Forward your application/agreement to the approving official.

The approving official (the Office Director) will:
- Review the Telework Program application/agreement;
- Tell your supervisor (if different than approving official) the decision;
- Forward the approved or disapproved telework agreement to the OD Telework Coordinator through your AO; and
- Evaluate the telework agreement yearly (if approved).

## What remote connections are available to OD teleworkers?
The Parachute and/or VPN are available to all teleworkers.  Please see the NIH Remote Access Policy at **http://www3.od.nih.gov/oma/manualchapters/acquisitions/26101-26-08/.**

Only certain job functions (e.g., accessing NIH systems such as VSOF) require high-speed connections.  If you need a high-speed connection to carry out your duties, you must submit a special request (including all documentation) to your Office Director *or designee*. (See OD Remote Access Policy for more information.)

## How do you get equipment for teleworking?
You may use your own equipment or check with your AO for equipment availability. Offices are encouraged to consider getting:
Laptops for office and home use;
A limited amount of equipment to be shared by teleworkers; and
Surplus equipment from other NIH sources.

- *If you use another system (Government or personally owned) to telework, you are responsible for ensuring that the system has up-to-date security patches.)*
- *OD will not supply fax machines or copiers to teleworkers.*

## Are you reimbursed for travel while teleworking?

There is no reimbursement for local travel between the office and your telework site.

## Who may approve duty station changes?

Only the NIH Deputy Director can approve duty station changes. This authority cannot be re-delegated.

## How do you manage your dependent care while teleworking?

To ensure that you can carry out your job duties while teleworking, you must arrange for dependent care (child or elder). Teleworkers may not be the primary caretaker on telework days.

## What happens if the Federal Government or NIH shuts down?

The NIH follows the OPM guidelines for emergency closings (http://www.opm.gov/oca/compmemo/dismissal.asp) when the Federal Government or NIH shuts down (e.g., for an emergency, bad weather, etc.).  Specifically, in the event of an emergency dismissal or shutdown, you may be required to continue to work at your alternative worksites based on the telework agreement signed by you and your supervisor.